لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Zahur 1351—August 1972

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EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the current of anti-religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he, the Promised Messiah, had come instead.

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The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war - like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers, and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, goodwill and self-less fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Nooruddin, as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named, with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities and aims and objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to

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It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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The Review of Religions

RABWAH, WEST PAKISTAN

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Fear of God and His love Activate Therapeutic Properties of the Quran

In his message to the members of the Fazle Omar Talimul Quran class, the Commander of the Faithful, the Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III; observed in the course of his Friday sermon delivered at Rabwah on 3, Ihsan 1351 A. H. (circa 3 June 1972), "I want to impress upon every would-be-member of this class in particular and every Ahmadi Muslim in general that mere recitation of the Holy Quran is hardly enough. In fact it is of imperative importance that one should cultivate affinity with the Holy Book. It is further necessary that one should assimilate its influences. It is neither a sort of magic nor witchcraft that mere recitation would give one all the benefit. There is no denying the fact that since the Holy Qnran is a blessing through and through its recitation would benefit one in some measure which must however fall far short of the blessing which the revelation of the Holy Quran aims at. In the verses that I have just recited Allah the Sublime has pointed out the two

basic imperatives necessary for absorbing the influences of the Holy Quran, one being fear of Allah and the other heartfelt love for Him.

So far as خشیت اللہ fear of Allah is concerned, in the Arabic language it does not stand simply for fear and awe; in fact it means the fear that is inspired iu the heart by the grandeur and glory of someone. Similarly when I say 'love', it does not mean the temporal type of love. When it is entertained towards God the Supreme, it is inspired in the heart by His attribute of goodness and owes its origin to His beneficence. The Holy Prophet (peace of Allah and His blessings be with him) says that Allah the Illustrious commanded him to worship Him alone. In Arabic idiom and in its Urdu translation it would mean that he should assume an attitude of humility and humbleness before Allah the Sublime. In Arabic language *Ibadat* signifies extreme humility. It would therefore mean that one should take to the humblest ways and attitude of utmost humility before Allah the Lord of glory. But this attitude of humility is sparked in the human mind when one gets an insight into the Divine attributes of majesty and supereminence. Humility is unattainable without it. In truth, Divine majesty and glory are so overwhemlingly great that when one gets an inkling of them his head is then raised only in an emergent situation and it ever stays bowed down.

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It is said in an *hadith* report that the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah and His blessings be with him) was riding one day...I do'nt remember whether it was on horse back or on a camel, and was engaged in prayer and so overwhelming was the weight of Divine glory and majesty on his mind that, according to observers, his head started bowing dowing so much so that it rested on the saddle; it could not go down any further. Here is the limit of humility and humbleness.....there is no further room left. Such mental, emotional and spiritual attitude is impossible to come by unless one experiences the

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flashes of Divine majesty and glory and has an insight into the attributive of Divine sovereignty. It is therefore that He says that those who fear their Lord are those who bow before His Majesty in humility, the teachings of the Holy Quran making their hairs stand on end, in response and as a reaction to it. For instance, if a lion suddenly confronts one in a jungle or one takes fright on account of something else, a common experience often encountered by every individual in his life, a wave of fear pervades the body and one has a crawling sensation, his hair standing on end. This in short is the sense of تقشعر But a lion is a midget compared to our Lord. Or, take for instance the soaring cliffs of the mountain and one standing below them on looking up into this insignificent height might be struck with vertigo—man is too puny to have an estimation of the majesty, supremacy and grandeur of Almighty Allah, for, these are His immeasurably unending attributes.

In fine, as it has been explained in these verses, one should cultivate the sense of fear of God; it is only then that the teachings of the Holy Quran make their impression and the attitude that the observation of Divine glory brings about starts taking shape. But where fear of Allah is absent and the sense of His glory is missing and there is no pact of subservience to Him, the teachings of the Holy Quran shall not make a dent. Fear of Allah is not a term applicable to a heightened sense of the feeling: it has both a beginning and an apogee with a great distance intervening. Man takes an initial step in the direction and then keeps moving up and slowly travels very far. Khalid bin Walid did not entertain the fear of God all at once to the degree which his attitude showed at the Yarmuk battle when he had taken to the ways of utter humility in awe of Allah, the Sublime. He was a general but at the command of the Khalifa of the day he became a soldier, without entertaining a sense of grievance in his heart, for the simple reason that he had already placed himself at a far lower rung than the one ordered

for him by the Khalifa. And this is the stand of extreme lowliness and this in a nutshell is the attitude inspired by fear of God. The next is love of God inferrable from the verse ثم تلين جلودهم وقلوبهم الى ذكر الله This love is sparked by Divine beneficence and other Divine attributes of grace. Both these, fear of God and love of God, have a beginning and a climax but no distance can be traversed without making for it. If you make a start and then keep moving i. e. brightening up yourself mentally, morally and spiritually, you will then be on the way and reach the terminal in terms of your individual talents and capabilities. Since individually every one has a different i.q. he must move within his personal orbit; neverthe, less, within the range of this orbit, by making a humble beginning one has to reach the terminal.

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The Holy Quran

The Holy Quran is thus not for bare recitation. This is a book that works out a revolution in one's life far greater than the naked human eye witnessed in the shape of commnnist revolution in Russia or socialist revolution in China. Man is by himself a universe, so have our Sufis prounounced. From one angle it is true that man is a universe by himself. A revolution takes shape within it but this revolution calls for fear of Allah, which gives man an insight into the greatness of Allah the Sublime and His glory and other attributes and keeps adding to it. One is also required to entertain personal love for Allah the Supreme. If you feed a dog for ten days he will step behind you wagging his tail. Allah the Magnificent has enriched you with tangible and intangible gifts and still there are ingrates among men who would not follow His Prophet and would not respond to His call. In short, personal love for God is sparked by exuberance of favors-when man finds himself hemmed in by Divine bounties in such a manner that he espies nothing but Divine goodness around him, he is filled with the love of Allah the Illustrious; no power of the world can then snap the tie that he forges with his Creator. There are thousands of examples to be found in our history, the history of man, examples of

lives of Prophets (Allah's peace be with them) and His saints. Of all these the best, the finest and the highest is that of the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah and His blessings be on him). His incarceration in Shaab-i-Abi Talib together with the handful of his adherents for 2½ years by the chiefs of Mecca is a well-known event of his life. All means of getting provisions had been sealed. Allah the Sublime certainly contrived to sustain them though the details have not been preserved by our history. A senior companiou related that one night he stepped on something which felt soft to his foot. He bent down, picked it up and ate it. Later relating the incident in Medina he said he did not have any idea as to what it was. He was so hungry that it never occured to him to see whether the thing was eatable or not. This is how they fared.

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In short their connection with Allah the Supreme did not snap on account of such terrible harships extending over a period of 2½ years. In fact, it grew firmer. Who knows what multifarious flashes of Divine grace were granted to them during this period. Every individual encounters such flashes in his life. We have experienced such flashes of Divine favors in our lives that are in no way connected with physical factors, for, God the Excellent does not depend on material means to enforce His command. He has created these means for us and we avail ourselves of them most gratefully. But God the Great does not depend upon them at all. In fact He is not dependent on anything. He has the power to start a cool breeze for the sole benefit of a paticular individual sharing the company of others without his comapnions sharing the benefit. God the Excellent can so arrange that a Hafiz Roshan Ali, to cite an example, can enjoy a meal without it being visible to his companions. Allah the Sublime is not dependent on any material thing, nor is He a prisoner of the material laws made by Himself, nor is He in any way dependent on them. He is غالب علی امرہ (The Quran: Yusuf 22). He can overrule His own laws. He does what He wills and when and how He wills.

It was in brief, a miraculous manifestation of the flashes of Divine love the small group of Muslims experienced during 2½ years that no wordly power, no temporal affliction and no earthly hardship could snap the tie of love they had forged with Allah the Sublime.

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In the foregoing verses of surah Zumar that I have recited collectively with relevance to the subject of my discourse, Allah the Illustrious has commanded us to bow down only before His grandeur and never to bow our heads to any one other than Him and to render all obedience to Him alone. Love in itself finds expression through submissiveness. Submission secured under duress is not capitulation ; it is only its shell. The obedience prompted by love is submission both in letter and spirit ; it is obedience as much in public as in the solitary moments of loneliness, for, its nature and manifestation have an altogether different complexion. It is therefore that the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah and His blessings be on him) declared that Allah the Sublime had commanded him to bow in humility only to Him and to render obedience to Him alone. Accordingly, on another occasion Allah commanded him to announce that he was the first and foremost person to render utmost obedience to Him and was further commanded to proclaim "I am ever bending before Allah the Supreme in utter humility rnedering to Him sincere obedience in whole-hearted love."

You and I and all the rest born during the past fourteen centuries are beneficiaries through humbly itdentifying ourselves with the Holy Prophet in duties of obedience. It was through lack of appreciation of this point that some members of the community were misled. No benefit accrues to anyone without subordinate identification with the Holy Prophet in duties of submission. If this type of relationship is cultivated then every favour is made available.

Eng : A. G. Soofi.

A sura of the Holy Quran

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

انا اعطيناك الكوثر فصل لربك وانحر انا شانئك هو الابتر

"In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. Surely, we have granted thee one who has much and gives much and often. So pray thy Lord and offer sacrifice. Surely it is thy enemy who is without issue."

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It is reported In a number of Ahadis that the Quraish of Mecca and their followers used to taunt the Holy Prophet, peace and blessing of Allah be on him, as Abtar meaning that although having many daughters born to him, he had no male issue living to maturity. It is to be remembered that in the pre-Islamic Arabian society a sonless person was regarded as lacking in respect. This attitude was due to the state of lawlessness prevailing in the society in which might was always right. To command respect and prestige in such a society it was necessary to have a force of warriors at one's disposal. Thus a tribe commanding greater number of warriors was treated with greater regard than others. Similarly within the tribe, the father of a number of able-bodied brave youths had a greater influence in the tribal affairs than one whose family consisted of mere women, a useless burden and a target of the wrath of their fathers, husbands and even sons.

One can realize the importance of male children in such a society, and also the disappointment of one who has no son to rely upon, and the consequent bitterness that he would have to experience by the taunts of others. In these circumstances at the death of his child Ibrahim, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) was mocked and jeered at by

the unbelievers. The fact of his being sonless made them look down upon him and even gave them, in their opinion, a justfiable excuse for rejecting his claim to prophethood. To the modern mind though, the fact of a person being sonless or even childless would not make any difference as regards his claim to prophethood. In such circumstances, at the time of the death of his child Ibrahim, when the unbelieving gleefully named him ابتر i.e. a person who has no son and الصابی المتر i.e. the sonless irreligionist, God revealed to him the above sura. Refuting the claim of the unbelievers that being sonless, nothing good could come from the Holy Prophet, God asserted that they were wrong "Indeed we shall give thee Kausar کوثر, the son who will be the most pious of servants and will distribute freely from the spiritual wealth bestowed upon him." Urging the Holy Prophet to offer prayer and make sacrifices in order to receive the reward God says, that although the unbelievers have sons of their own and the Holy Prophet having no son was a target of their mockery and jeering a time will come when it will become abudantly clear that in reality it was not the Holy Prophet who was issueles but his enemies and opponents.

Now the question is who, in that case, is the Holy Prophet's son? For, all the male issues of the Holy Prophet died during his life time. It is to this fact that the Quran alludes in the verse:

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ما محمد ابا احد من رجالکم

(Muhammad is not the father of any of your males)..

It is therefore reasonable to assume that the son promised in Sura *Kausar* means a spiritual son and not a physical son. Moreover this prophecy of the Holy Quran must relate to a preiod when the spiritual progeny of the Holy Prophet was to be in danger of being extinguished for ever. It cannot relate to the period immediately after the Holy Prophet, because the Holy Prophet left behind him scores of great spiritual sons like Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali and others who were worthy fo

officiating in his seat. It must, therefore, relate to someone who was to champion the cause of Holy Prophet and of Islam at a time when there was no one else to do so, or when, in the words of the Holy Prophet 'the Muslims would become Jews and Christians', and thus cease to be the spiritual progeney of the Holy Prophet. God says at such a time He will give a spiritual son to the Holy Prophet who will inherit the spiritual legaey of the Chief of Prophets.

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In one of his *Ahadis*, the Holy Prophet, (peace blessings of Allah be on him) describing the charactrestics of the Messiah who was to appear for the rejuvenation of Islam says that he shall distribute riches freely to all. In other words, the Messiah is the *Kausar* 'one who has much and gives much and often', promised in the foregoing sura.

Thus said the Holy Prophet

(١) أبو عبيدة عن جابر بن زيد عن أبى هريرة أن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم كان اذا انصرف من ملاة الغداة قال هل راى أحد منكم الليلة رويا ويقول انه ليس يبقى من بعدى من النبوة الا الرؤيا الصائحة

(1) Rabi bin Habib says :

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Abu Ubaidah told me that Jabir bin Zaid reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Holy Prophet, after offering the morning prayers, used to ask :-
"Did anyone of you have a dream last night?"
He also used to observe :
'Nothing of the prophethood remains after me except true visions'.

(٢) أبو عبيدة عن جابر بن زيد عن انس بن ماللك عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال الرؤيا الحسنة من الرجل الصالح جزه من سته وأربعين جزءا من النبوة

(2) Rabi bin Habib says:

Abu Ubaidah told me that Jabir bin Zaid reported on the authority of Anas bin Malik that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), said :
'The true vision of a pious man is one seventeenth part of prophethood'.

(٣) أبو عبيدة عن جابر بن زيد قال أدركت ناسايروون عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال الرؤيا من الله والحكم من الشيطان فاذ ارأى احدكم ما يكر فليتفل عن

يساره ثلاث مرات اذا استيقظ وليتعوذ بـا الله من شرها فانها لن تفره ان شاء الله و قال : قال احدهم انى كنت لارى الرؤيا هى اثقل على من الجبل فلما سمعت هذا الحديث فما كيت ابالى بها .

(3) Rabi bin Habib says:-

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Abu Ubaidah reported that Jabir bin Zaid said:
'I have heard from people that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:
'A true vision is from Allah and a bad dream is from satan. It any of you sees anything in sleep that he dislikes, on waking up he should spit thrice on his left side and should pray to Allah for protection against its harm. God willing it won't hurt him'.

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Book Review

Karachi Khuddam Souvenir

The Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya, Karachi, has garnered yet another laural to its laudable achievements, a souvenir entitled Nusrat Jahan Number, their 15th annual gathering memento. A beautifully printed 100 page publication, the Souvenir highlights the brilliant performance of the Ahmadiyya Movement overseas mission enterprize in the field of medical service and education in West Africa under the Nusrat Jahan Leap forward scheme initiated by the Commander of the Faithful, The Sahibzada Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Khalifa-tul Masih III, in the year 1970.

From the announcement of the program to build hospitals and schools in six states of West Africa to the translation of the resolve into a concerete reality it seems but one step. There are already medical centres and schools with fine buildings hummung with activity in these states as the illustrated round-up under the caption Nusrat Jahan project unfolds to the reader.

Prim both in get-up and set-up the Souvenir makes a refreshing study inasmuch as it gives big boost to hope and perks up faith both in the immediate as well as the ultimate victory of the expedition of Islam currently forging ahead under the guidance of the Khalifa-tul Masih III.

A. G. S.

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Immortal Life

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

"And thou, O soul at peace! return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee. So enter thou amongst my chosen servants and enter thou My garden."

(Quran 89:28-31)

There is no doubt about it that man's real and permanent entity is not his physical body but an ethereal entity which pervades the former and the heart of the latter is the soul.

The Quran throws more light on the nature of the soul and the hereafter than any other scripture, Nevertheless man's understanding of this subject will always remain extremly limited. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

"And they ask thee concerning the soul. Say, 'The soul is by the command of my Lord; and of the knowledge thereof you have been given but a little.' (17:86)

"And no soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden for them, as a reward for their good works." (32:18).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him).

"The blessings of paradise are things which the eye has not seen, the ear not heard, nor has the mind ever conceived."

We propose to deal in the followings pages with the view held by Islam about the soul and the realms of life which vibrate on frequencies higher than those of this material universe and which cannot be seen or fully realised by the physical senses. In addition to information given by Islam some knowledge and realisation of this subject may be acquired through:

1. Intuition. 2. Psychic experience and spiritual

experience.

Intuition

This is a power of the mind which is able to realise a truth without the aid of reasoning or analysis. A flash of intuition reveals to a person the solution of a problem or secret of an invention which years of research and study failed to disclose. The flash may come when awake or asleep as the mind is awake twenty four hours of the day even though the body may be in restful repose.

Premonitions are often the result of an intuitive warning. A man who has booked a flight to New York feels impelled for no apparent reason to change it for a later one. The plane on which he had first booked his passage crashes and all a board are killed.

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Inventors, artists, poets, authors, scientists have been among the numerous persons throughout the ages who have testified to the miraculous power of intuition. Edison was but one of many inventors who had secrets of his discoveries come to him through an intuitive flash. It is said of Michael Angelo who was one of the world's greatest geniuses and intellects that the solutions of some of his greatest works came to him while asleep. There are numerous others who have been guided and enlightened at unexpected moments when their thoughts were at rest or even dwelling on some totally different matter.

Normally knowledge is acquired through the five senses, sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch and is accumulated from information, memory and experience with the aid of which reasoning is developed. Intuitive knowledge stems from a higher and independent source and is not the result of mental exercise or reasoning anymore than the young squirrel which has never known a winter nevertheless gathers and stores a supply of nuts to provide for its nourishment well in advance of the cold season. Its actions are guided by instinct from a higher power

and not as a result of experience, instruction or education.

Knowledge of spiritual truths pertaining to matters in the spirit world may be revealed to a person through intuitive guidance. Intuition is a form of Divine inspiration which has been and continues to be experienced by people of every class, culture and faith.

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Phychic Experience

This is an experience which cannot be explained by any understood natural law and is, therefore, often termed supernatural. Such an experience is attributed to the power of extra-sensory-perception which has the capacity of revealing things which the normal physical senses are unable to detect or explain. Examples of psychic experiences are :

(1) In an apparent waking state a person clearly sees an event occuring at a distant place which is proved to have happened in the exact manner and at the very same time. Such an experience may also happen when asleep.

(2) While in full consciousness the apparition of a living or dead friend or relative appears before a person in all reallity and even speaks to him.

(3) A person hears his father's voice clearly calling out to him and on investigation it is established that at that very moment the father died several hundred miles away.

(4) A student sees and memorises in a dream questions on an examination paper. A few days later when sitting for his exam he finds identical questions on the paper and has no difficulty in answering them.

Spiritual Experience

A spiritual experience is a soul-moving experience- It is charged with the presence of God as distinct from a psychic experienee which normally leaves no spiritual impression upon the soul although it may be very similar to a spiritual experience

where in both cases voices may be heard, distant places visited or seen, knowledge vouchsafed, visits from departed souls and future events foretold. Frequently in spiritual experiences the unmistakeable Divine Voice is heard and the presence of God palpably felt. The eyes of the soul see beyond earthly horizens into realms which reveal the truth of immortality. Spiritual phenomena is more matured than psychic phenomena though it in no way minimises the remarkable effects and influences of the latter which has opened the minds of thousands to the fact that there is more to life than earthbound existence.

The Real Self

Our real self is an immortal spirit or soul-body which is attached to a body of flesh which sooner or later dies; but we never die. We are a soul with a body attached to it; not a body with a soul attached to it. In order to see, know and understand ourselves we have to keep our eyes turned inwards. Although both bodies are interrelated the existence of the soul-body-our real self-is not dependent on the physical body except inasmuch as the soul body-our real self-is created along with the physical body during the months of development in the womb. The birth of the soul is a point which has been discussed by the Promised Messiah the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya movement, in his book "The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam." The soul body-our real self-is as much alive after the death of the physical body as it was before its expiration. We are immortal.

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Purpose of Life

"We have not created the jinn and the men but that they shall worship me." (51 : 57)

Worship of God is not confined only to prayer and meditation but embraces every thought, word and action, for whatever we think, say or do for the sake of God is an act of worship.

While we are connected with this world our goal in life should be self-purification. We should seek the attainment of

this goal through prayer and constant effort in reflecting the attributes of God in our general behaviour. High is the goal and tremendous the task; but efforts made in this direction are always most rewarding. We should never despair despite our failures and weaknesses but rather find inspiration in the following words of Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, the Khalifa-tul Masih II.

> "Islam rescues man from despair and tells him that he can, inspite of his errors and mistakes, attain to the purity of mind and conduct which is the highest goal of man. It thus encourages him to make constant efforts towards virtue and purity and enables him ultimately to arrive at this goal."

Real prosperity lies in self-purification which should be the cherished goal of our lives:

> "Verily he truly prospers who purifies himself, remembers the name of his Lord and offers prayers."

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Commenting on the object of man's earthly life the Promised Messiah has said:

> "The real object of man's life according to the Holy Quran is, therefore, a true knowledge and worship of God and a total resignation to His will that whatever is said or done is said or done for his sake only."

The goal of existence on earth has also been beautifully epitomised by Hazrat Ali:

> "All the occupations of a wise man are for hfs self reform, all his cares for the benefit of the next world and all his endeavours for the good of the life to come."

Life on this planet is the beginning of an eternal journey on which we live attached to a body of flesh and bone which is left behind to decay after we quit it and pass on to higher

ethereal realms. Those realms are as real as this world and all the other innumerable orbs of the universe revolving and rotating in the vast ocean of space. Life is short and a time for preparation. No wasted moment can be retrieved. The Promised Messiah has warned us:

> "And who told them that life is long? There is no season for death. It may overtake you at any time. So we must value whatever time we have. We will not have these times again."

Our real inner self is immortal so our eyes should always be focussed ahead and not rivetted to the things of this world. May Allah sharpen our preception of spiritual truths and enable us to fulfill successfully the purpose of life in this world of material environment.

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Etheric or Soul Body

The mysteries of the soul cannot be unravelled by brain power; but there is no doubt that every human body houses a soul. This truth has been confirmed by God in the Holy Quran which throws more light on the subject than any other scripture.

Man possesses a double or ethereal counterpart of his physical body which serves as a temporary body for the soul after death. This subtle etheric soul body also has the capacity of deteaching itself from the physical body even before death and the large number of persons throughout the world and in all ages who have experienced this detachment firmly establishes the truth of this phenomenom. The real self is an intangible spirit body which normally dwells within and coincides with the physical body; and within that spirit body lies the nucleus of eternal life—the soul.

During sleep the soul-body detaches itself from the physical body and possesses full consciousness while it is on its travels. Before awakening it is drawn back into the physical body and normally the person has no recollection of what occurred;

but sometimes a person does remember and is able to describe the experience. An anonymous gentleman wrote from Plymouth :

> "I suddenly discovered that I was above my body looking directly down upon it! It was lying on the bed as clear as day. I had a good searching look at the face in particular and thought how strange it was to be now looking at myself just as other people see me. The experience was very real and definite indeed... nothing imaginary about it. I know that the experience was an actual fact."

(The Phenomena of Astral Projection)

Mr. Bruce Belfrages writes in his autobiography :

> "I had a very serious illness from which I almost died. One night I felt my body and saw it quite clearly lying motionless on the bed. It all seemed perfectly natural and the experience proved to me, quite beyond doubt,...that the body and the spirit are quite seperate, that the spirit, the real me, cannot be hurt and cannot die."

It is not only in natural sleep that people have out-of the-body experiences. Patients have had them while under anaesthetics. Mr. J. A. Findlay writes in his book 'Looking Back' :

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> "A lady, whose honesty is unquestionable, told me that during the time she was under an anaesthetic, she felt herself standing overlooking her physical body on the operating table. She was interested to follow everything done by the surgeon and nurses, but, what impressed the surgeon when she told him of her experience afterwards, was the fact that she saw him do something to her inside that she could not have dreamed about."

Cases of people who have had the experience of finding themselves outside their physical bodies while under an anaethestic are numerous. Similar is the case with the sick and dying and and also those who are living normally in the best of health. These experiences are not figments of the imagination but absolute genuine occurences. Thousands of such cases are on record and are in keeping with the teachings of the Holy Quran which declares that God takes away the soul of everyone not only at the time of death but also at times during their life time :

> "And He it is Who takes your souls by night and knows that which you do by day." (6 : 61)
>
> "Allah takes away the souls of human beings at the time of death ; and during their sleep of those that are not yet dead. And He keeps those against which He has decreed death, and sends back the others till an appointed term. In that surely are signs for a people who reflect." (39 : 43)

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This subject is an extremely aborbing one in as much as it brightens our spiritual vision, helps us to realise our true self more clearly, encourages us to delve deeper into eternal truths and strengthens our faith in the unseen.

Visible Departure of Soul Body

There are many accounts on record given by people who have claimed to have seen the soul body leave a person's physical body at the moment of death. No doubt instances of this kind are unusual but for that matter all other kinds of psychic and spiritual phenomena are also unusual. There are persons, by way of example, who have claimed to have seen angels but no God-fearing Muslim will reject their statement on the grounds that such claims are unusual. Now and again people do have visions of angels though we are not conversant with those laws which enable them to see them ; nor are we conversant with those

laws whic enable people sometimes to observe the departure of the soul body at the time of death ; but our lack of understanding is not sufficient cause to reject the truth of this pehenomenon.

Mr. F. L. Rawson writes in his book 'Life Understood':

> "In her book 'Little women' Louisa Alcott relates how at the moment of death, she saw as it were a thin smoke arise from her sister Bertha and vanish. The doctor told her that this was not an hallucination but the life departing visibly Dr. Patric O'Donnell says that he had photographed this at the Mercy Haspital, Chicago."

Dr. Robert Crookhall mentions in his book 'Intimation of Immortality :

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> "Dr. R. B. Hout also saw the soul hody of his aunt when it was being permanently released at death."

Mrs. Snell, who was a nurse, has stated :

> "One evening she (he friend) was taken by convulsions and died in my arms before the doctor had time to arrive...that was the first death at which I had ever assisted. Her heart had hardly ceased to beat when I distinctly saw something like a vapour diseugage itself from her, arise from her body, and stop at a short distance from the corps where it condensed into a form absolutely identical with that of my friend. Later when I became a nurse, an occupation which I followed for twenty years, I assisted at numerous deaths, and immediately after death I always observed the condensation of the etheric form above the body, always identical with the living body, and after condensing it would vanish from my eyes."

The Promised Messiah—the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement—often had the experience of seeing and even conversing with departed souls. He has written in his monu-

mental work 'The Philosopy of the Teachings of Islam' :

> "I have personal experience in this matter. Many a time, when awake, I have seen visions in which I have seen those who were dead. I have seen many an evil doer and a wicked person with a body quite dark and smoky. I have personal acquaintance with these matters and I assert it strongly that, as Almighty God has said, everybody is granted a body either transparent or dark."

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Departed souls remember this life

The soul is a conscious entity and the Holy Quran tells us in many places that in the new life after death it will remember details of its life in this world. The unbelievers and the wicked will plead to be sent back to this world to be given a second chance to win the pleasure of God. Had they no memory of this world then they would not have called upon God to send them back :

> "Until when death comes to one of them, he says entreating, 'My Lord send me back that I may do righteous deeds in the life that I have left behind." (23 : 100, 101)
>
> "O that we might be sent back ! And then we would not treat the signs of our Lord as lies and we would be of the believers." (6 : 28)

The following verses also show that departed souls will hold memories of this life :

> "On that day man will remember, but of what avail shall be his rememberance." (89 : 24)
>
> "Dead think they only tarried a short time in this world." (17 : 53)

In addition to the aforesaid verses there are also many other similar passages in the Holy Quran.

Transition of the soul

The soul is the nucleus of our eternal being and manifests its power always through a body in this world and in the hereafter. As the soul always needs to operate through a body the question now arises in what kind of body does it dwell after it quits the human frame and enters the spirit world. The answer may well be the etheric body or soul body which varies in degrees of radiance or dullness according to the condition of the soul at the time of death. Nevertheless it does not serve the soul as a permanent body.

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Islam teaches that following the death of the physical body the soul undergoes a transformation. It may be likened to a drop of sperm which grows and developes in the womb from whence it emerges as a new creation in the form of a fully developed child. Similarly, after death, the soul may be likend to a sperm drop and its temporary body to a womb in which it undergoes a transformation eventually to emerge on the day of resurrection as a new spiritual creation. This body now possesses o new soul. The general physical and mental features of a child much depend upon the multifarious inherent characterists locked within the sperm drop call. Similarly the condition of the new spiritual body depends much upon the state of the soul when it quitted this world. The new body now developes and matures as the child grows and matures to adult age; and when this process is completed on the Day of Judgement the gateways of heaven and hell are opened wide.

God is Merciful and in His mercy He has decreed that the punishments of hell will not be everlasting. Wrong-doers will suffer more or less as do convicts in prison after which they will be released and allowed to enter heaven where the bestowal of spiritual favours continually flows and where grades and stages of spiritual rewards and attainments are innumerable. God says in the Holy Quran :

"And for all are grades of rank according to what

thev did." (Quran 46 : 20)

"Behold, how we have created some of them over others in the present life ; and surely, the Hereafter shall be greater in degrees of rank and greater in excellence." (17 : 22)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings of Allah be on him) has said :

"There are a hundred grades in paradise prepared by Allah for those who fight in the path of Allah and, in between each, is a great distance as is between the and the heaven."

The Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movemen, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad has also said :

"Those who accept God here, who lose themselves in divine love and who take their stand on the right path, have in store special honours which would not be attained by other people." (The Wil).

The spirit of Islam demands that a sincere and earnest Muslim should never rest content with the thought that he has achieved or done sufficient to earn himself a place in paradise.

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Hell & Heaven

Pir Salahud-Din

(NOTE : The Editor is not bound to agree with all the views expressed by the learned writer in this article.)

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The Koran says that the inmates of hell and heaven will live in their respective abodes for ever. The words used in the text are 'Khalidina' or 'Khalidina abada'. Khalada means: He dwelt, or dwelt for a long time or for ever (Lane). Abada means: He dwelt constantly without quitting (Lane). We have translated these words as 'for ever'. 'For ever', does not always mean 'till eternity'. One of its meanings as given in the Oxford Dictionary is 'incessantly'. It is in this sense that we use this term when we say: Ever Yours.

The fact that the connotation of these words is different in the two cases is borne out by other verses of the Koran. 11 : 107 to 109 read as under :-

As for the wretched, they shall be consigned to hell. There they shall moan and cry, and live till the heavens and the earth abide, Yet should your Lord please, He will end their punishment earlier. Your Lord shall do as He pleases.

As for the blessed, they shall go to paradise. There they shall live till the heavens and the earth abide. Yet should your Lord please He will extend His bounty. It is His wont not to cut off His bounty.

Again the Koran mentions paradise a place of ever lasting bliss (9 : 21) from which its inmates will not be removed (15:49) and as an unending reward (41:19). But with regard to hell it says : There is none among you who will not enter it 19:72). They will live in it for years (78 : 24). Hence it is not a place of eternal abode. It should be noted that the mercy of Allah

envelops every thing (7 : 157). Hell is no exception to it. In fact, it is a sort of hospital where people will be cured of their ailments. That is why the Koran says that it will tend its occupants like a mother' (10 : 10), and is one of the bounties of your Lord (55 : 42).

It may be noted that in all cases where it is stated that its inmates will live in hell for ever, the sentence is couched in the active tense. This shows that they will live in hell for ever by their own choice. But Allah can in His mercy save them from the consequences of their own deeds.

Again where it is stated that the inmates of hell will not come out of it 2 : 168 ; 5 : 38) the active participal noun has been used, so that the sentence means that they will not be able to come out of it of their own accord. But as regards the inmates of heaven the passive participal noun is used (15 : 49), so that it means that they will not be turned out of it. The use of two different terms derived from the same root خرج for the inmates of hell and heaven is very significant. It shows that whereas the inmates of hell will desire to come out of it but will not be able to do so of their own accord, the inmates of heaven will have no desire to leave heaven nor will they be turned out of it.

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The Koran describes hell as a fire which rises over the hearts (104 : 8). About the inmates of hell it says :

Allah's abhorrence of you is greater than your abhorrence of yourselves. (40 : 11) "Allah will not speak to them nor look at them, nor purify them on the Day of Judgement. (3:78).

Thus hell mainly consists of mental torture. When the inmates of hell will find that they have lost the Most Beloved

---

1. Muhammad Abn Abu Bakr says that this verse indicates that the persons who are mentioned here will enter hell only for a limited period (Unmoozaj).

One who refuses to speak to them and look at them, they will naturally suffer an agony which will gnaw into their souls like fire.

Allah has stated in the Koran over and over again that no injustice will be done to any body on the Day of Judgement. (See 2:282; 3:26; 3:162; 6:161; 16:112; 39:70; 45:23). Indeed if Allah were to give an unlimited punishment for acts which have been performed under many limitations, He certainly cannot say that He has done no injustice. The Koran says that Allah has created the nature of man after His own nature (30:31) But human nature which is the index of that of Allah, revolts against a sentence which is out of all proportion to the offence committed. It is, therefore, evident that it is against Allah's nature that He should give an unending punishment to anybody.

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Again, the Koran says:

> 'Those who do evil will be rewarded in proportion to their evil deeds'. (40 : 41).
>
> "There are grades for all according to their deeds, so that He may fully repay them according to their deeds and no wrong is done to them." (46 : 20).

This shows that even in hell there will be different grades. Some will suffer the punishment for shorter period and some for longer. Similarly the intensity of punishment will be different in different cases.

It may also be noted that the Koran depicts Allah as a Being who is the first cause of every thing, so much so that it is He who leads astray whom He will and guides whom He will. (See 13:28; 16:94; 35:9; 74:32). It is true that He has given man a free will and given him a choice to act as he pleases, but yet in the ultimate analysis man is bound down by His environment and his inheritance. That is why Allah accepts the ultimate responsibility for all acts. He will, therefore, punish man only to the extent he mis-uses or fails to use the free will allowed to him. Since the free will allowed to man is

not unlimited, He will not give him unlimited punishment.

It would not be out of place to mention here the Koranic philosophy of punishment. It says:

> He that does good, does it for the good of his own soul; and he that does evil, it shall recoil upon him. Your Lord is not the least unjust to men. (41:47).

Allah does not forgive serving other gods besides Him though He forgives everything short of it for whomsoeuer He will. Indeed he that serves other gods besides Him commits a great sin (4:49). Say: "O My men who have wronged yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Allah forgives all sins. He is most forgiving, infinitely merciful". (39:54).

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Those that are wretched—and how wretched they will be, will live amidst scorching winds, boiling waters, and the shadows of black smoke, which will be neither cool nor soothing. They lived in comfort and ease before this, and persisted in heinous sin. (56:42).

Those alone who do evil and are overwhelmed by their sins shall own hell. (2:28).

It was only that they might mend their ways that we punished them. (43:49).

Thus according to the Koran punishment is a natural reaction of one's own deeds.

If one does not observe God's laws of health one suffers in body and health, and if one does not observe His laws of good conduct, one suffers in mind and soul. Just as the reaction of the body to the violation of the laws of health is to try to save itself from the injury by summoning to its aid automatic

protective measures, and it is only a gross misconduct or the repetition of misconduct which results in a permanent injury to the body, similarly the reaction of the mind to the violation of the laws of conduct is an automatic abhorrence against one's own actions, and it is only the repetition of the major sin i.e. the worshiping of false gods which results in a permanent injurry to the soul.

The Koran says that the purpose of punishment is that the wrongdoers should mend their ways (43:49). That is why they will be punished only for their most evil deeds (41 : 28) i.e. such deeds which leave a permanent scar on the soul.

The Koran says that the purpose of punishment is that the wrongdoers should mend their ways (43 : 49). That is why they will be punished only for their most evil deeds (41 : 28) i.e. such deeds which leave a permanent scar on the soul.

It is wrong to presume that those who have committed heinous sins against their own souls will be cured of their ailments on the Day of Judgement without proper treatment.

The Koran says :

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> 'Could you but see them when they will be apprised of hell ! They will say : "Would that we could be sent back ! If only we could, we would not deny the revelations of our Lord and would believe". The only thing is that their treachery which they once concealed will become clear to them. Yet even if they are sent back they would revert to that which they are forbidden. They are liars no doubt. (6 : 28, 29).

A long habit cannot be broken so easily. But when their habits have been broken in the fire of hell and they are cured of all their ailments, and the purpose of punishment has been served, they would be discharged from hell.

The fact that the Koran has depicted the temporary nature

of hell in terms which can be understood only by men of knowledge is due to the fact that the picture of hell has been drawn in order to threaten the laity. Indeed most of the purpose and force of the threat will be lost if milder language is used.

The study of the outer crust of the Koran, which alone is available to a cursory reader, makes one think that it is full of punishments and rewards. And it is to these two motives alone that the laity reacts. But those who delve deeper into the Book find that it is all love and life. The prophet, more than whom nobody knows the Koran, has clearly stated that hell will one day be entirely empty of its occupants and the wind will rock its doors !*

Allah will surely close down hell one day. All authorities agree that it is no breach of promise if a threat is not executed. The Koran says : Allah has power to implement or change his decrees. But most men do not know this (12 : 22). Even iff, therefore, it is admitted, though the context does not admit o such an interpretation, that Allah has threatened the sinners to an ever-lasting hell, it is in consoance with His mercy that He should cure them of their ailments and pardon them, even though he has to do it by annihilating time, which, after all, may not be such an unavoidable dimension as it seems to us.

Thus whereas haven is a place of ever-lasting bliss, hell is a place of temporary imprisonment, a hospital.

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* یاتی علی جهنم زمان لیس فیها احد و نسیم الصبا تحرك ابوابها

(Maalim-ul-Tanzil under 11 : 107).

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